

Army Reserve, Guard job center opens

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — The 125,000 Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers currently mobilized for the war on terror will have help finding jobs when they go home.

The Army Career and Alumni Program Demobilization Center that opened in Alexandria, Va., Sept. 29 will help them find new jobs, said James Hoffman, program director.

“Things change,” Hoffman said. “A Soldier gets home after being mobilized and finds the job he was counting on isn’t there anymore; maybe the company folded, or maybe that Soldier realized he has grown and the old job just wasn’t right any longer.”

The center responds to questions about eligibility for transition services and benefits as well as offer referral to other service providers such as the Department of Labor and Department of State Employment Office and Veterans Affairs.

Program officials are giving reserve-component Soldiers business cards with contact information as they demobilize, Hoffman said.

A returning Reservist or Guardsman can be put in touch with the person who can help by calling 1-877-722-2270 or emailing acap4rc@hoffman.army.mil. Additional details are at <http://www.acap.army.mil>.

More information about that can be found at the offices of the Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve at www.esgr.org.

Guard and Reserve: Save Medical Receipts for Possible Reimbursement

National Guard and reserve members are urged to save their receipts for medical bills that may be covered under some of the new health care benefits approved by Congress but not yet put in place. Provisions of the 2004 Defense Authorization Act, signed into law Nov. 24 by President Bush, grant earlier access to Tricare for certain reservists and extend Tricare coverage for longer periods when they leave active duty. If reservists are called up to support a contingency on activation orders with delayed effective dates, they’ll get Tricare coverage for themselves and their families beginning on the issue date of the orders or 90 days before the active duty is to start, whichever is later.

Another new program extends transitional health benefits to reservists when they are demobilized and to active-duty members when they separate from service. Members and their families will have health care coverage for 180 days after demobilization or separation. Previously, Tricare coverage had continued for only 60 days for those with less than six years of service and 120 days for those with more than six years.

Rear Adm. Richard Mayo, deputy director of Tricare Management Activity, said reservists called to active duty or deployed in support of a contingency operation should save “health care-related receipts, claims and explanation-of-benefit forms” dating from Nov. 6, 2003. That paper-

work will be needed if a reservist is deemed eligible for retroactive reimbursement from the Defense Department, Mayo said.

Defense officials will contact eligible reservists by mail and explain what services are covered and how to submit claims.

DFAS officials caution against look-alike sites

ARLINGTON, Virginia (AFPN) — Officials here caution the 2 million military and civilian users of myPay to use only the official Web site when accessing pay account information.

“Personal information is valuable and should be safeguarded,” said Claudia L. Bogard, director of corporate communications for the Defense Finance and Accounting Service. “Don’t provide your personal information to any Web site unless you know it can be trusted.”

Look-alike sites have recently frustrated myPay customers who have been confused by accidentally finding their way to a commercial site that is in no way affiliated with DFAS or the Department of Defense.

The DFAS myPay Web site is found at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/>.

Scholarship for Spouses of Military Members

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is proud to announce the launch of its Military Spouse Scholarship program. This exciting opportunity will allow military spouses worldwide the opportunity to receive assistance in furthering their education.

Recurrent reassignments and relocation of military personnel create unique challenges for military spouses to complete undergraduate and post-graduate education, thus hindering their ability to maintain professional development, rewarding employment, and long-term career progression. More than 51 percent of all military personnel are married, because the dependence on our highly skilled, well-trained military forces has increased due to intensified world conflicts in recent years, NMFA believes it is vital to develop a program addressing the complicated challenges of military spouse education. A reduced number of challenges for our military families directly impacts recruitment and retention of qualified military personnel. It is for this reason that NMFA has developed the Spouse Scholarship Fund. Spouse Scholarships will be awarded annually for up to four academic years to uniformed servicemembers spouses. Opportunities include obtaining professional certification through an accredited post-secondary or graduate school. The scholarship funds may be used to assist with tuition, fees, books, and school room and board.

Any military spouses interested in applying must complete a nominating packet through the NMFA website at www.nmfa.org. The deadline for nominations is March 31, 2004. Award letters will be mailed no later than May 5, 2004.